

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Status of the Application

The Office Action of February 17, 2010, has been reviewed and carefully considered.

Applicants' representative thanks the Examiner for the courtesy extended to Applicants' representative during the telephonic interview conducted May 27, 2010. The present amendment is being submitted in accordance with that interview during which new claim 22 was discussed.

Reconsideration of the above-identified application, as herein amended, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 9-14, 21 and 22, with claims 1 and 22 being independent, are now pending in this application. By this amendment, claims 16-19 are amended, independent claim 15 is cancelled, and new independent claim 22 is added.

In the Office Action of February 17, 2010, claims 1, 2, 4-6, 9-14, 20 and 21 were allowed. Claims 15-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph; Claims 15-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,815,665 ("Teper") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,397,329 ("Aiello") and U.S. Patent Publication 2001/0011351 ("Sako"); and claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Teper, Aiello, and Sako in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,234,059 ("Beaver").

The rejection of claims 15-19 under 35 U.S.C. §112 is rendered moot by the cancellation of independent claim 15.

Amendments to the Claims

Claim 15 has been cancelled without prejudice.

Claims 16-19 have been amended to now depend from new independent claim 22.

Claim 22 is added. New system claim 22 has a one-to-one correspondence with method claim 1 and replaces now-cancelled system claim 15.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 15-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,815,665 ("Teper") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,397,329 ("Aiello") and U.S. Patent Publication 2001/0011351 ("Sako"); claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Teper, Aiello, and Sako in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,234,059 ("Beaver").

Applicants disagree that Teper, Aiello, Sako, and Beaver, whether taken alone or in combination, render claims 15-19 unpatentable. However, in an effort to advance prosecution, Applicants have cancelled original system claim 15 and replaced it with new system claim 22, which has a one-to-one correspondence with allowed method claim 1. As such, pending claims 16-19 and 22 are deemed to be in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

Applicants have responded to all of the rejections recited in the Office Action. Reconsideration and an early Notice of Allowance for all of the pending claims are therefore respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that an interview would be of assistance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

It is believed that no additional fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the present application. However, if any such additional fees or charges are required at this time, they may be charged to our Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 03-2412.

Respectfully submitted,
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